



**A GUIDE
FOR PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS
AND PROPRIETORS**

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www.boston.gov.uk/taxis

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1. GENERAL MATTERS

Introduction

In Section 80 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1976, as amended by Part II of Schedule 5 of the Transport Act, 1980, and the Transport Act, 1985, a HIRE CAR is defined as:-

"a motor vehicle constructed or adapted to seat fewer than nine passengers, other than a Hackney Carriage or public service vehicle, which is provided for hire with the services of a driver for the purpose of carrying passengers."

This guide is intended to advise and assist applicants and licence holders on the law relating to the operation of hire cars and to the administrative procedures involved in the application for a licence. The guide is not exhaustive and reference should also be made to the following legislation:-

<u>Legislation</u>	<u>Abbreviation</u>
Town Police Clauses Act, 1847	TPCA
Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1976	LG (MP) A
Transport Act, 1985	TA

N.B. Where relevant, in the guide, the source of the law is given in the above abbreviated form. Copies of the conditions attached to licences are printed on the licences and in this guide.

Correspondence, Forms of Application, etc.

All correspondence should be addressed to - and all forms for an application are available from - the Licensing Section, Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston. PE21 8QR.

Drivers Badge

Photographs for a driver's badge must be a true likeness, in colour, showing the full face, with no hat, helmet or sunglasses and be taken against a light background.

Lost or Stolen Driver's Badge/ Vehicle Licence

This should be reported immediately to the Licensing Section, Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston. PE21 8QR. Upon receipt of a fee (and passport-sized photograph, for a driver badge) a duplicate badge or Licence can be issued.

Lost or Stolen Vehicle Plate

This should be reported immediately to the Licensing Section, Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston. PE21 8QR. Upon receipt of a plate charge, a new plate will be issued.

Collection of Driver's Badge and Licence

The above should be collected in person by the Licence holder from the Licensing Section. For security purposes the Licensing staff will not normally hand these to third parties.

Personal Visits to the Licensing Office

Licensing Officers are normally available for personal visits between 9 am to 4.30 pm Monday to Thursday and 9 am to 4.15pm Friday. **Intending callers are advised to telephone the Licensing Office to make a prior appointment** (telephone number Boston 314214).

Boston Borough Council Area

The Boston Borough Council area consists of:- Algarkirk, Amber Hill, Benington, Bicker, Boston, Brothertoft, Butterwick, Fishtoft, Fosdyke, Frampton, Freiston, Holland Fen, Kirton, Leverton, Old Leake, Sutterton, Swineshead, Wigtoft, Wrangle and Wyberton.

2. APPLICATIONS

For full information on our application policy please see Appendix D.

Fees and Charges

All fees and charges are payable in advance. Details of all current fees and charges are available from the Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR.

Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to BOSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL and crossed. Any licence issued on payment by a cheque, which is not honoured by the Bank will be invalid. You are advised to obtain an official receipt for all monies paid.

Where an applicant is refused a licence, the fee previously paid for the licence is refunded, unless the applicant appeals against refusal. If any appeal succeeds the fee will be taken; if the appeal fails the fee will be refunded LESS any costs which have been awarded by the Court. (NB any fee paid in connection with a Medical Certificate or Criminal Record Disclosure is NOT refundable.)

Licence Renewal Reminders

All licence holders will normally be sent a reminder and the necessary forms of renewal approximately one month in advance of the expiry of a licence. **Please note, however, that the responsibility for renewal rests with the licence holder.** Reminders are sent purely as a courtesy.

When submitting an application for renewal of a Private Hire Driver Licence, applicants should note that a new driver licence will not be issued until all the necessary checks have been completed. The Council, therefore, recommends that all applicants submit renewals in respect of Drivers licences at least 15 working days before the expiry of the current licence.

Personal Attendance

Applicants must attend the Licensing Office in person to make an application for a new or renewed licence.

Identity of Applicants

The Council will make every effort to confirm the identity of all applicants. Verification of identity, date of birth, address and any change of name will be obtained. A right to work check will be undertaken at the time a licence is applied for or on renewal application for existing drivers who have not previously had a right to work check. A further right to work check will be undertaken during the currency of a licence where the licensee has a time limited right to work in the UK. A copy of the identification used to verify the right to work check will be taken and retained for the period that you are a licensed driver and for 2 years afterwards.

Production of UK/EU Driving Licences

Applicants for a Private Hire Driver Licence should note that a FULL UK or EU driving licence with a minimum of over one year before expiry, (if an EU Licence, the licence together with the paper part issued by DVLA), or legal equivalent should be produced. However, it is recognised that in some circumstances this may not be possible. As the Council require written proof of the holding of a licence, applicants in these circumstances should write or telephone DVLA at Swansea and request a letter confirming their licence details for production to the Council. If an E.U driving licence is produced applicants will have to make arrangements for the issuing authority to confirm in writing the details of their licence and is sent by the issuing authority directly to the Licensing Section, Boston Borough Council, Municipal Buildings, West Street, BOSTON, PE21 8QR, UK.

NB: Any fee charged by the issuing authority is the responsibility of the applicant.

Basic English and Mathematics Test

A basic English test must be undertaken by all applicants for a Private Hire Driver Licence, other than applicants for renewal of a driver's licence in force at the date of application. The test forms part of the process of ensuring that the applicant is "a fit and proper person". Applicants should contact the Licensing Office to arrange an appointment for the test. If the test is failed at the first attempt then a further test can be taken at a later date. If the second test is failed subsequent test(s) may be taken but will incur a charge.

Hackney Carriage Knowledge Test

Private Hire drivers do not have to pass the knowledge test. However, they may do so in order to gain a joint PH and Hackney Carriage Driver Licence. On passing the knowledge test (for which there is a charge), if a Private Hire badge and licence has been previously issued there will be a charge to transfer these to a Hackney Carriage Driver Licence and Badge.

Medical Examinations

All applicants making their first application must lodge a certified medical certificate. A medical certificate will then be required every six years thereafter, unless an applicant's condition warrants examination on a more regular basis.

An applicant aged 65 years or over must undergo the medical examination every year.

As recommended by the Medical Commission on Accident Prevention the authority requires licence holders to attain DVLA Group 2 Vocational Licence Standard.

Any fee charged by the Doctor is payable by the applicant.

A Medical Practitioner who has full knowledge of the applicant's medical history must carry out the examination.

Where the Medical Practitioner cannot carry out the eye test this part of the medical form must be completed and the form signed by an optician prior to the medical being carried out.

Medical certificate forms and further information can be obtained from the Licensing Section.

Any applicant who does not meet the DVLA Group 2 Vocational Licence Standard can expect to have

their application refused.

Licensed drivers who no longer meet the DVLA Group 2 Vocational Licence Standard either temporarily or permanently must notify the Licensing Authority forthwith. In such cases the driver can expect to have their licence either suspended or revoked. Guidance on the DVLA Group 2 Vocational Licence Standards is available from the Licensing Authority.

The Council will not normally accept certified medical certificates submitted with an application, which is received more than 6 weeks after the Doctor has signed the report.

Private Hire Vehicle Operators Licence

The Council issues Operators Licences on a 5 year basis.

When submitting an application for an operator licence, applicants are required to declare any unspent conviction(s) they may have,

Applicants for a private hire vehicle operator licence, who do not hold a hackney carriage/private hire driver licence with this authority, will be required to present, at their expense, the result of a current and up to date Basic Disclosure Check from Disclosure Scotland. Disclosures that are more than 1 calendar month old at the time of application will not be accepted.

Conviction(s)

When submitting an application for a licence to drive a licensed vehicle, applicants are required to declare any conviction(s) or caution(s) they may have, including any they previously regarded as "spent" under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, 1974. The information applicants give will be treated in confidence and will only be taken into account in relation to their application. Applicants should be aware that the Borough Council may require applicants to apply for a Criminal Records Disclosure from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The Disclosure will reveal the existence and content of any criminal record or relevant information held in the name of an applicant. Checks will also be made with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA). Information received from the DBS will be kept in strict confidence while the licensing process takes its course and will be retained on manual and computer record(s) for no longer than is necessary. Any information received may be used in Court proceedings.

It is the general policy of the Council to only request a DBS Disclosure on initial applications and renewal applications every 3 years thereafter. Exceptionally, the Council may request an additional Disclosure:

- i in any case if serious allegations are made against a driver; or
- ii in any case where previously unrevealed information comes to light and the Licensing Officer is satisfied that the information cannot be verified in any other way.

The disclosure of a criminal record or other information will not debar an applicant from gaining a licence unless the authority considers that the conviction(s) renders him/her unsuitable. In making this decision the authority will consider the nature of the offence, how long ago and the age of the applicant when it was committed and any other factors which may be relevant.

Disclosures that are more than 1 calendar month old at the time of application will not be accepted.

The Council has adopted guidelines relating to the relevance of conviction(s) and each case will be decided on its own merits. The Council's guidelines are set down in Appendix D

Applicants may contact the Licensing Section, in confidence, to discuss what effect a conviction(s) might have on their application.

Code of Conduct

Applicants will be asked to sign a declaration to confirm that they understand the Driver Code of Conduct forms part of the Licensing Authority's Policy. See Appendix F.

Non Disclosure or Misrepresentation

Every applicant must be honest when producing information in connection with a licence application. Any applicant who provides false information or fails to provide information may find his application refused, or if a licence is granted that licence may be revoked or suspended. The applicant may also be prosecuted.

Appeals

Any applicant refused a driver's and/or Private Hire vehicle licence has a right of appeal to a Magistrates Court.

3. INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS AND PROPRIETORS

The Advance Booking of Private Hire Vehicles and Illegal Plying For Hire

Private Hire vehicles must not pick up passengers under any circumstances without a prior booking made by the hirer **direct** with the operator for which the vehicle works. Failure to do otherwise is an offence and may invalidate your vehicle's hire car insurance cover (Section 45, TPCA).

Plying for hire with any vehicle which is not a Licensed Hackney Carriage (including a Private Hire Vehicle) is an offence (Section 45, TPCA) and it is open to the Council to institute proceedings in the Magistrates Courts against any operator or driver committing such an offence. Furthermore, any person so convicted is liable to a fine not exceeding £2,500. Licence holders should also note that the Council may suspend, revoke, or refuse to renew a private hire operator's and/or drivers licence on any reasonable grounds, which may include a conviction(s) for illegal plying for hire.

'Plying for Hire' means being on view and inviting the public to use the vehicle (Rose v Welbeck Motors Limited, 1962). This can be inferred by the appearance of the vehicle, and the place it is on view and its conduct. **Therefore, private hire vehicles must not wait near taxi ranks, without reasonable cause, as to do so may be construed as acting as a hackney carriage vehicle and plying for hire.** Furthermore, any gathering of more than 2 private hire vehicles could be perceived as forming a rank and lead to prosecution for plying for hire. The practice of passengers booking fares with the driver who relays the booking information to the operator over the vehicle's radio constitutes plying for hire. The driver must not act as the "go-between" under any circumstances.

Operator Licences

"Operate" means in the course of business to make provision for the invitation or acceptance of

bookings for a hire vehicle (Section 80 LG (MP) A). Every operator of hire vehicles must be licensed by the District Council (Section 46 LG (MP) A).

A District Council cannot grant a licence unless it is satisfied that the applicant is a "fit and proper person" (Section 55 LG (MP) A). A licence cannot be issued for a period exceeding 5 years - Council policy is that licences are issued annually (Section 55 LG (MP) A).

Section 75 of LG (MP) A provides that a Private Hire Vehicle and driver licensed by a District Council will be authorised to act in a controlled area of any other District Council. They are licensed by one District Council in order that they will be free to go through any other controlled district and to operate fully as a licensed Private Hire Vehicle and driver.

Suspension and Revocation of Operator Licences

The Council may suspend or revoke or refuse to renew a licence on the following grounds:-

- (a) the commission of an offence under the LG (MP) Act.
- (b) unfitting conduct of the operator.
- (c) any material change in the operator's circumstances.
- (d) any other reasonable cause (Section 62 LG (MP) A).

Responsibility for Hirings

Every hiring of a hire vehicle is deemed to have been made with the operator who accepted the booking, whether or not he/she provided the vehicle (Section 56 LG (MP) A).

Operators are therefore directly responsible for the actions or omissions of drivers or proprietors used by them and must, therefore, ensure that all vehicles and drivers are licensed and insured. Operators can be required to produce their booking and vehicle records on request to any authorised office of the Council for inspection.

Fare to be Demanded

The driver shall not demand from any hirer of a Private Hire Vehicle a fare in excess of any previously agreed for that hiring between the hirer and the operator, or if the vehicle is fitted with a taximeter and there has been no previous agreement as to the fare, the fare shown on the face of the taximeter.

Charging Separate Fares

The practice of "doubling up" of passengers and charging separately is legal only in the following circumstances:-

- (a) All the passengers carried on the occasion in question booked their journeys in advance; and
- (b) Each of them consented, when booking his/her journey, to sharing the use of the vehicle on that occasion with others on the basis that a separate fare would be payable by each passenger for his own journey on that occasion (Section 11 TA).

Note: that separate fare agreements must be made at the time of booking with the operator, NOT the driver, owner of the vehicle or anyone else.

Drivers of Licensed Vehicles must be Licensed

Once a vehicle is licensed as private hire, every driver of that vehicle, whether it be used for private hire, contract hire, or any other purpose including personal "non-hire" use by the driver or proprietor, must possess a current private hire car driver licence (Section 46 LG (MP) A).



Drivers' Badges

All drivers must wear the badge provided when driving a private hire vehicle in a position so as to be plainly visible (Section 54 LG (MP) A). The badge need not be worn if:-

- (a) the vehicle is being used in connection with a wedding or funeral.
- (b) the vehicle is carrying written permission by the Council that the plate need not be carried (Section 75 LG (MP) A).

On revocation or suspension of the driver licence, the badge must be returned to the Council on demand (Section 61, LG (MP) A). The driver's badge remains the property of the Council and must be returned to the Licensing Section, Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, either at the termination of the licence or when moving from the Borough and ceasing to be a licensed driver.

Drivers' Licence

This authority will not grant a Private Hire Driver's Licence unless it is satisfied that the applicant:-

- (a) is a "fit and proper person".
- (b) is medically fit to drive a Private Hire Vehicle (Sections 51 and 57 LG (MP) A).

The law requires any applicant for a private hire driver's licence to have held a full UK driving licence (or legal equivalent) for at least 12 months (Section 51, Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1972). The Council will not normally regard the applicant to be sufficiently experienced unless he has held a full licence for at least two years..

Licence holders should note that the issue of a three year Private Hire Drivers' Licence is conditional to having held a Private Hire Drivers' Licence for three consecutive years, without a break. If you allow your licence to expire before applying for renewal, the continuity is broken.

Any change in the driver's address or employer must be notified to the Licensing Section.

Production of Licences

Licence holders must produce the licenses to an authorised Officer or Police Constable if requested to do so (Sections 50, 53 and 56 LG (MP) A).

Obstruction of Officers - It is an offence to:-

- (a) wilfully obstruct an authorised Officer or Police Constable.
- (b) fail to comply with any reasonable requirement of an authorised Officer or Police Constable.
- (c) fail to give an authorised Officer or Police Constable any assistance or information he may reasonably require (Section 73 LG (MP) A).

Prolongation of Journeys

A driver must proceed by the shortest route, subject to the instructions of the hirer. No driver shall without reasonable cause, unnecessarily prolong, in distance or in time, the journey for which the private hire vehicle has been hired. (Section 69 LG (MP) A).

Suspension and Revocation of Driver Licences

The Council may suspend or revoke or refuse to renew any licence on the following grounds:-

- (a) the commission of an offence involving dishonesty, indecency or violence.
- (b) the commission of an offence under LG (MP) Act.
- (c) any other reasonable cause (Section 61 LG (MP) A).

Conviction(s)

A licence holder **MUST** disclose to the Council, in writing, details of any conviction(s) imposed on him/her during the currency of his/her licence.

Seatbelts - Private Hire Drivers - Periods when you do not have to wear a seatbelt

Whilst all drivers are encouraged to wear seatbelts the driver of a Private Hire Vehicle may only claim exemption from wearing a seatbelt when a fare paying passenger is **actually in the vehicle** and not at any other time. **Passengers** must wear a seatbelt if available.

Vehicle Licences

Every vehicle used for hire must be licensed by the District Council (Section 46, LG (MP) A). You are **strongly** advised to contact the licensing section prior to purchasing the vehicle. This will enable the licensing section to confirm whether or not the vehicle is suitable, thus avoiding purchase of an unsuitable vehicle which will not meet the criteria resulting in refusal of a licence.

A District Council cannot grant a licence unless it is satisfied the vehicle is:-

- (a) suitable in type, size and design for such use.
- (b) does not resemble or appear to be a Hackney Carriage.
- (c) in a suitable mechanical condition.
- (d) safe and comfortable.
- (e) insured for hire car use (Section 48, LG (MP) A).

A vehicle licence shall be valid for a period of twelve months.

NB The Road Safety Act 2006 has abolished the exemption for vehicles used for contract work (previously under Section 75 LG (MP) A), to require a Private Hire Vehicle Licence. All vehicle previously used under this exemption are now required to be licensed.

Funerals & Weddings

Vehicles used wholly or mainly for funerals by a funeral director do not need to be licensed for Private Hire work. Vehicles used solely for weddings need not be licensed as Private Hire Vehicles.

Accidents and Damage to Vehicles

Accidents causing damage to licensed vehicles, which materially affect the safety, performance or appearance of the vehicle must be reported to the Council within 72 hours (Section 50, LG (MP) A).

Advertisements and Signs on Vehicles

A Private Hire Vehicle shall not display any signs on or from the vehicle as to lead any person to believe that the vehicle is a Hackney Carriage. A sign consisting of the words TAXI or CAB or FOR HIRE or HACKNEY CARRIAGE or similar words is prohibited. Roof signs are prohibited on private hire vehicles by this Authority.

Identification Plates on Vehicles

A licensed vehicle must display the plate issued by the Council at all times (Section 48 LG (MP) A).

The plate need not be displayed on a licensed hire vehicle if:-

- (a) the vehicle is being used in connection with a funeral.
- (b) the vehicle is being used in connection with a wedding.
- (c) the vehicle is carrying written permission by the Council that the plate need not be carried (Section 75 LG (MP) A).

The plate remains the property of the Council. On revocation, suspension or expiry of the vehicle licence, the plate must be returned to the Council within 7 days (Section 58, LG (MP) A). The loss or damage of a plate must be reported immediately to the Council, where upon the payment of a fee a new plate can be issued.

Vehicle Insurance

Before a vehicle licence can be issued a current certificate or cover note in the name of the proprietor for hire car use (original, not a photocopy) must be produced (Section 48 LG(MP)A).

A certificate or a cover note must be produced on demand to an authorised Officer (Section 50 LG (MP) A).

Transfer of Ownership of Vehicles

Where the ownership of a licensed vehicle is transferred the Council must be informed by the person listed as owner by the Council in writing of this within 14 days, stating the name and address of the new owner (Section 49, LG (MP) A).

Suspension and Revocation of Vehicle Licences

The Council may suspend, revoke or refuse to renew a licence on the following grounds:-

- (a) the vehicle is unfit.
- (b) the commission of an offence under the LG (MP) Act or TPC Act.
- (d) Any other reasonable cause (Section 60 LG (MP) A).

A licence may be suspended by an authorised Officer or Police Constable if he/she considers the vehicle unfit (Section 68, LG (MP) A).

On suspension, revocation or expiry of the licence, the plate must be returned to the Council within 7 days (Section 58, LG (MP) A).

Type of Vehicle

All vehicles presented for a Private Hire Vehicle Licence, **MUST** meet the requirements set out in Appendix 'A' (Section 47 LG (MP) A).

This council does not licence left hand drive vehicles with the exception of imported stretched limousines only. Stretched limousines will not be licensed unless the V5 (logbook) states they have 9 or less seats (8 passengers and 1 driver).

Testing of Vehicles

All vehicles (whatever their age) must be tested and inspected before a licence can be issued to ensure that they are mechanically fit and of good appearance (Section 50 LG (MP) A).

Every Private Hire Vehicle licensed by Boston Borough Council, **MUST** be inspected on at least two separate occasions in every 12 months. The proprietor is responsible for the making of an appointment for the inspection of a vehicle. Details of the test can be found in Appendices 'B' and 'C'.

An authorised Officer or Police Constable has power to inspect and test any licensed vehicle at any reasonable time (Section 68 LG (MP) A).

MOT Certificate Exemptions for Vehicles

Vehicles licensed by Boston Borough Council are exempt from the requirement to possess an MOT certificate. If licence holders are requested to produce an M.O.T. certificate, by the Police, the vehicle

licence and certificate of compliance issued by the Council should be produced instead. When applying for motor tax, the vehicle licence and certificate of compliance plus MOT form V112 must be produced at the Post Office. These forms are available from the Post Office.

NB: Once the Council licence has expired, is suspended, revoked or cancelled, the vehicle reverts to the status of an ordinary private vehicle and the normal traffic laws relating to vehicle excise licences and the holding of an MOT certificate apply.

Taximeters in Vehicles

A hire vehicle is not required to fit a taximeter, but if such a meter is fitted, it must be correctly calibrated, tested for accuracy and approved (Section 71, LG (MP) A). The Council requires taximeters to be tested and sealed by the Council's own testing garage.

Vehicle Fitness Spot Checks

From time to time a licensed vehicle may be subject to a 'spot check' to determine its road worthiness. This check will be carried out by an authorised Officer of the Council or by an authorised tester in the presence of an authorised Officer or by a Police Constable, usually by the roadside.

- (a) (i) If, as a result of a check, an immediate suspension notice is issued, then the vehicle must not be used under any circumstances as a licensed vehicle until it has been re-examined and the suspension lifted by an authorised Officer. Re-examination is by a full test being carried out by the test garage. This is booked in the normal way.
- (ii) Your attention is drawn to the warnings at the foot of the suspension notice.
- (b) (i) If the suspension notice gives you 7 or 14 days in which to rectify the defects, then a vehicle may continue to be used until the date given on the notice.
- (ii) If a vehicle has not been re-examined and the suspension notice lifted by an authorised Officer by the date given on the notice, then from that date, the licence is automatically suspended until such time as the vehicle is re-examined and the suspension lifted by an authorised Officer. Re-examination is by a full test being carried out by the test garage. This is booked in the normal way.
- (iii) In the latter case, your attention is drawn to the warnings at the foot of the suspension notice.
- (c) The roadside check carried out on a vehicle, because of practical difficulties, is unable to cover all items normally examined at a full test. The list of defects given to you only serves as justification for the issue of a suspension notice.
- (d) When a vehicle is re-examined at the test garage, a full, normal test will be carried out (Details of the test can be found in Appendices 'B' and 'C').
- (e) When a vehicle passes, the tester will issue a pass certificate; this must be taken to the Licensing Office before the suspension can be lifted.

Rights of Appeal to the Magistrates' Court

There are rights of appeal against a Council's refusal to issue a licence and against conditions attached to the grant of a licence. Rights of appeal also exist where a licence is suspended or revoked. An appeal must be lodged at a Magistrates' Court within 21 days from the notice of refusal, revocation or suspension of a licence.

4. CONDITIONS - PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE OPERATOR

1. Every person to whom a licence under Section 55 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1976, has been granted by this Council shall keep a record of the following particulars of every booking of a Private Hire Vehicle invited or accepted by him/her, whether by accepting the same from the hirer or by undertaking it at the request of another licensed operator and shall produce such records on request to any authorised Officer of the Council or any Constable for inspection:-

- (a) Date and time of each booking.
- (b) Date and time of each journey.
- (c) Commencement and destination of each journey.
- (d) Name of hirer.
- (e) Charge.

All booking records kept by the operator shall be preserved for a period of not less than six months following the date of the last entry. If a computer system is used, the operator must be able to provide a print-out of all required booking details.

2. The operator shall keep records of the particulars of all private hire vehicles operated by him/her, which particulars shall include details of the owners, registration numbers and drivers of such vehicles, together with the details of the private hire vehicle licence including number issue and expiry dates. All vehicle records kept by the operator shall be preserved for a period of not less than six months following the date of the last entry. If a computer system is used, the operator must be able to provide a print-out of all required details.

3. No person shall operate a Private Hire Vehicle without:-
(i) The vehicle is licensed under Section 55 of the Act;
(ii) The driver has a current licence under Section 51 of the Act.

4. No Private Hire Vehicle shall ply for hire in the Borough. Every contract for the hire of a Private Hire Vehicle licensed under Section 56 of the Act shall be deemed to be made with the Operator who accepted the booking for that vehicle whether or not he/she accepted the booking.

5. The operator shall provide a prompt, efficient and reliable service to members of the public at all reasonable times and for this purpose shall in particular:-

- (a) Ensure that when a private hire vehicle has been hired to be in attendance at an appointed time and place, the vehicle shall, unless delayed or prevented by sufficient cause, punctually attend at that appointed time and place.
- (b) Keep clean, adequately heated, ventilated and lit any premises which the operator provides and to which the public have access, whether for the purpose of booking or waiting.
- (c) Ensure that any waiting area provided by the operator has adequate seating facilities.

6. The operator is not required to fit a taximeter to a private hire vehicle, but any vehicle so equipped shall **NOT** be operated until the taximeter has been previously tested and sealed by

the Council's testing station and a meter inspection report lodged with the Council.

7. (a) The operator may charge whatever fare has been agreed between him/her/herself and the hirer before the commencement of the journey. However, he/she shall inform the Council of the basic scale of fares intended to be charged and give the Council at least one calendar month's notice of any changes proposed thereto.
- (b) The operator shall display visibly inside a private hire vehicle a current list of his/her basic scale of charges for inspection by passengers.
8. Where any complaint is made against a private hire vehicle driver, then the complainant shall be requested to put that complaint in writing immediately and submit it to the Council or the Operator who shall in turn within 48 hours of receipt of the complaint notify the Licensing Authority.
9. The operator shall notify the Council in writing of any change of his/her address (including any address from which he/she operates or otherwise conducts his/her business as an operator) during the period of the licence, within seven days of such change taking place.
10. The operator shall within seven days disclose to the Council in writing details of any conviction(s) imposed on him/her (or if the operator is a company or partnership, on any of the Directors or Partners) during the period of the licence.
11. The operator shall ensure that any driver employed by the operator or working from the operator's premises holds a current Private Hire Driver's Licence issued by Boston Borough Council.
12. The operator shall at all times operate his/her private hire business in compliance with the terms of Part II of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1976, and failure so to do may result in the licence being suspended or revoked.
13. Private hire vehicles may not refuse to carry a guide, hearing or prescribed assistance dog belonging to a passenger, unless the driver has a proven medical condition that would preclude such action. No additional charge must be made to carry a guide, hearing or other prescribed assistance dog belonging to a passenger.

5. PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE - CONDITIONS OF LICENCE

1. The proprietor of a Private Hire Vehicle shall report to the Council as soon as reasonably practicable, or in any case within 72 hours, of the occurrence of any accident to such vehicle causing damage materially affecting the safety, performance or appearance of the vehicle or the comfort or convenience of persons carried therein.
2. Every Private Hire Vehicle (together with any taximeter therein) licensed by the Council must be inspected on at least two separate occasions in every 12 months. The inspection will be carried out at the Council's garage, and the proprietor is responsible for the making of arrangements for such inspections. The first inspection must be made in the fifth month

following the date of the licence and the second immediately prior to the renewal of the licence.

3. A Private Hire Vehicle shall not be used before the identity plate issued by the Council has been affixed to the rear of the vehicle, in a conspicuous position, to the satisfaction of the Council.
4. The proprietor of the vehicle shall return the identity plate within seven days of the expiration, suspension or revocation of a Private Hire Vehicle Licence.
5. The vehicle must not carry a greater number of persons than that indicated on the vehicle licence plate issued by the Council.
6. A Private Hire Vehicle shall **NOT** be used to ply for hire within the Borough.
7. A Private Hire Vehicle shall not display any signs on or from the vehicle as to lead any person to believe that the vehicle is a Hackney Carriage.

No sign shall be permitted to be displayed on the vehicle other than:-

- (i) Signs which must be displayed by law or under the licence conditions;
 - (ii) The business telephone number of the vehicle operator.
 - (iii) The name of the operator or his/her firm PROVIDED that no name shall be permitted to be displayed which incorporates the terms "taxi(s)", "cab", "hackney carriage" or any other term which might lead a member of the public to believe that the vehicle is a Hackney Carriage.
 - (iv) When displaying the business telephone number and/or the name of the operator the vehicle **MUST** display the words "PRIVATE HIRE ONLY" on the metal panel of both front doors of the vehicle. The lettering must be at least 5cm (2") in size and be of a neat and consistent standard.
8. The vehicle shall **NOT** be fitted with a roof sign.
 9. There shall be provided and maintained in the vehicle at all times when it is in use or available for hire a fire extinguisher which shall be securely fixed to the vehicle in such a position as to be readily available for use. The extinguisher shall be indelibly and clearly marked with the vehicle plate number (issued in respect of the vehicle).
 10. The vehicle and all of its fittings and equipment shall at all times when the vehicle is in use or available for hire, be kept in an efficient, safe, tidy and clean condition.
 11. The operator is not required to fit a taximeter to a private hire vehicle, but any vehicle so equipped shall **NOT** be operated unless the taximeter has been previously tested and sealed by the Council's testing station and a meter inspection report lodged with the Council.
 12. (a) The operator may charge whatever fare has been agreed between him/her and the hirer before the commencement of the journey. However, he/she shall inform the Council of the basic scale of fares intended to be charged and give the Council at least one calendar month's notice of any changes proposed thereto.

(b) The operator shall display visibly inside the vehicle a current list of his/her basic scale of charges for inspection by passengers.

13. The operator shall notify the Council in writing of any change of his/her address during the period of the licence within 7 days of such change taking place.
14. The operator shall at all times operate the vehicle in compliance with the terms of Part II of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1976, and failure to do so may result in the vehicle licence being suspended or revoked.
15. The private hire vehicle must carry a guide, hearing or prescribed assistance dog belonging to a passenger, unless the driver has a proven medical condition that would preclude such action. No additional charge must be made to carry a guide, hearing or other prescribed assistance dog belonging to a passenger.

6. PRIVATE HIRE DRIVER - CONDITIONS OF LICENCE

1. Change of Address or Employer

The driver must notify the Council in writing of any change of his/her address or employer during the period of the licence within seven days of such change taking place.

2. Driver's Badge

- (a) When driving a Private Hire Vehicle the driver is required to attach the badge issued by the Council to his/her jacket or similar garment, in such position and manner to be plainly and distinctly visible to the passengers.
- (b) The badge (which remains the property of the Council) must be returned to the Council, either at the termination of this licence or when moving from the Borough and ceasing to be a Private Hire Driver.
- (c) If a driver's badge and/or licence is misplaced or lost the driver must notify the Council immediately.

3. Conduct of Driver

The driver shall:-

- (a) Afford all reasonable assistance with passengers' luggage.
- (b) At all times be clean and respectable in his/her dress and person and behave in a civil and orderly manner.
- (c) Take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of passengers conveyed in, entering or alighting from the vehicle driven by him/her.
- (d) Not without the express consent of the hirer, drink, eat or play any radio or sound reproducing instrument or equipment in the vehicle other than for the purpose of sending or receiving messages in connection with the operation of the vehicle.
- (e) At no time cause or permit the noise emitted by any radio or other previously mentioned equipment in the vehicle which he is driving to be a source of nuisance or annoyance to any person, whether inside or outside the vehicle.
- (f) Not to tout or solicit or cause or procure any other person to tout or solicit in any public place any person to hire or be carried for hire in any Private Hire Vehicle nor proceed along the highway for the purpose of plying for hire.
- (g) The driver shall at the request of any authorised Officer of the Council or any Constable produce for inspection his/her official driver's licence forthwith or;
- (h) In the case of a request by an authorised Officer, before the expiration of the period of



five days beginning with the day following that on which the request was made at the above address;

- (i) In the case of a request by a Constable before the expiration of the period stated by the Officer at any Police Station which is within the Borough and is nominated by the driver when the request is made.
- (j) The driver of a private hire vehicle shall not without reasonable cause unnecessarily prolong in distance or in time, the journey for which the private hire vehicle has been hired.

4. **Passengers**

- (a) The driver shall not convey or permit to be conveyed in the vehicle a greater number of persons than that indicated on the licence plate issued by the Council of any licensed vehicle being driven by him/her or in his charge.
- (b) The driver shall not without the consent of the hirer of a vehicle convey or permit to be conveyed any other person in that vehicle.

5. **Lost Property**

- (a) The driver shall immediately after the termination of any hiring of a Private Hire Vehicle or as soon as practicable thereafter carefully search the vehicle for any property which may have been accidentally left there.
- (b) If any property accidentally left in a Private Hire Vehicle by any person who may have been conveyed therein is found by or handed to the driver, he shall take it as soon as possible and in any event within 24 hours to a convenient Police Station and leave it in the custody of the Officer in charge on their giving a receipt for it. (Or take it to the Council's Licensing Office).

6. **Written Receipts**

The driver shall if requested by the hirer of a Private Hire Vehicle provide him/her with a written receipt for the fare paid.

7. **Guide, Hearing or Prescribed Assistance Dog and other Animals**

The driver shall not convey in a Private Hire Vehicle any animal belonging to or in the custody of him/herself or the proprietor or operator of the vehicle.

If the private hire vehicle being driven by the driver has been hired:

- (a) by or for a disabled person with their guide, hearing or prescribed assistance dog; or
- (b) by a person who will be accompanied in the private hire vehicle by such a disabled person;
he/she must:
 - (a) carry the disabled passenger's dog and allow it to remain with the passenger; and
 - (b) not make any additional charge for doing so.

Any driver with a medical reason for not complying with this condition must obtain a medical certificate from his/her registered medical practitioner to exempt him/her from this condition and lodge the aforementioned certificate with the Council. Any payment of such a certificate will be paid by the licence holder.

Any other animal belonging to or in the custody of any passenger which in the driver's discretion may be conveyed in the vehicle shall only be conveyed in the rear of the vehicle.

At the termination of any such hiring the driver will ensure that the seat occupied is cleared of all fur/hair before accepting another fare.

8. **Prompt Attendance**

The driver of a Private Hire Vehicle shall, if he is aware that the vehicle has been hired to be in attendance at an appointed time and place or he has otherwise been instructed by the operator or proprietor of the vehicle to be in attendance at an appointed time and place, punctually attend at that appointed time and place, unless delayed or prevented by sufficient cause. If for any reason whatsoever the driver is unable to attend at the appointed time and place, he shall take immediate steps to report his circumstances to the proprietor or operator of the vehicle to enable alternative arrangements to be made.

9. **Taximeter**

If a Private Hire Vehicle being driven by the driver is fitted with a taximeter, the driver shall not cause the fare recorded thereon to be cancelled or concealed until the hirer has had a reasonable opportunity of examining it and has paid the fare (unless credit is to be given).

10. **Fare to be Demanded**

The driver shall not demand from any hirer of a Private Hire Vehicle a fare in excess of any previously agreed for that hiring between the hirer and the operator or, if the vehicle is fitted with a taximeter and there has been no previous agreement as to the fare, the fare shown on the face of the taximeter.

11. **Conviction(s)**

The driver shall notify the Council in writing of any conviction(s) imposed upon him/her during the period of the licence within seven days thereof including the date, the Court, the offence and the penalty.

7. **REGULATORY AND APPEALS COMMITTEE**

An Authorised Officer is delegated by the Council to grant hackney carriage and private hire licences where the applicant fulfils the basic qualifications. However, should in his/her opinion, there be any doubt as to whether the applicant is a "fit and proper person", an application will not be granted under delegated powers. That application may then be pursued to the **REGULATORY AND APPEALS COMMITTEE**. Generally speaking The Authorised Officer will not grant an application which contain a declaration of a conviction(s) involving dishonesty, indecency, violence or a disqualification from driving and which is not clearly covered by the Council guidelines relating to the relevance of conviction(s).

The general procedure for applications which are pursued to the Committee is as follows:-

- a) A Committee (consisting of elected members of the Council) will consider the application. The applicant or a representative of his choice may address the Committee in support of the application. Applicants should attend as the members of the Committee may wish to ask questions.
- b) A written report will be put before the Committee setting out the details of the application. The applicant will have an opportunity to read this before the interview.
- c) If the Committee decide to grant a licence then this can be done immediately.
- d) Should the Committee decide to refuse to grant the application, then the applicant will be notified in writing setting out his rights in the matter. Basically, on receipt of such notification

the applicant may appeal to the Magistrates Court (within 21 days) against the decision of the Council.

Because the Committee does not meet on a regular basis, there may necessarily be a delay between application and grant or refusal in such a case.

APPENDIX 'A'

DIMENSIONS AND ABILITY OF VEHICLES TO BE LICENSED AS PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLES

Steering

With the exception of imported stretched limousines the steering wheel must be on the offside.

Doors

All doors must be capable of being opened from the inside.

Saloon cars must have four doors, being two on each side of the vehicle, a rear hatch/door not being accepted as one of the four doors.

Minibuses/People Carriers/Converted van type vehicles without a nearside door are not acceptable. Furthermore multi-seater vehicles must have at least four doors; if the rear door is to be used for access and egress then access to this must be direct and not be blocked by a line of seats. Doors should open to an angle of at least 80% to the body of the vehicle, except in the case of sliding doors.

Engine Size

The acceleration and braking capabilities should match the engine and carrying capacity of the vehicle.

Seat Width

The size requirement is 40cm" (approx.16") per person. The distance should be measured in a straight line lengthwise at the widest point of the front half of each seat. The distance for 3 persons of 120cm"(approx.48") should be taken between the arm rests as these can in some cases significantly reduce the width. Further to this a height of 85cm" (approx.34") between seat and roof and 18cm" (approx.7") from back of front seat to front of rear seat (when front seat is fully pushed back), is to be recommended for passenger comfort.

Seating Arrangements

The maximum number of passenger seats allowed is 8 and all should have direct access to a door without the need to climb over the rear of any seat. Tip-up seats or seats which require the back to be lowered will only be permitted when giving access to the side doors of multi-seater vehicles (seats of this type giving access within saloon and estate vehicles will not be permitted). Bench type seating will not be permitted.

With the exception of stretched limousines seats must not be sideways to the direction of travel. All seat belts should comply with current seat

belt regulations. The minimum number of passengers that a vehicle should be capable of carrying whilst complying with the above seat width provision is 4.

Luggage

The vehicle must be able to carry a reasonable amount of luggage (safe from inclement weather). Luggage should be stored securely and not stored in such a way as to hinder access to a door.

Vehicle Licence Requirements

Where there are standard conditions annexed to vehicle licences relating to the condition and fitness or appearance of a licensed vehicle the vehicle must comply with these conditions.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VEHICLES

Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licences will not be issued to vehicles being presented to be licensed to carry 5 or more passengers unless such vehicles are immediately wheelchair accessible (i.e. the vehicle must be capable of accommodating a disabled passenger whilst seated in his/her wheelchair). The requirement to remove seats in order to accommodate a wheelchair will not be accepted; seats which fold to allow a wheelchair to be accommodated will be accepted.

This Authority's minimum requirements with regard to a wheelchair accessible vehicle are:-

- (a) That it can accommodate a disabled passenger whilst seated in his/her wheelchair (there must be adequate headroom for the passenger). For this purpose a "wheelchair" is a reference wheelchair as defined in The Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations 2000.

The dimensions for a reference wheelchair are defined as having

total length of 1200mm, including extra-long footplates
total width of 700mm
sitting height (from ground to top of head) of 1350mm
height of footrest above floor of 150mm

- (b) That the rear/side door used for wheelchair access must be capable of opening as wide as the aperture. A single rear door must be open to a minimum of 90 degrees and for twin rear doors both must open to a minimum of 90 degrees.
- (c) The doorway should provide a minimum of 1220mm in its central third measured from the upper centre of the aperture to a point directly below on either the upper face of the fully raised lift platform or the upper face of the ramp fully deployed on ground level. The door aperture must be wide enough to accommodate a reference wheelchair and have a minimum width of 740mm of unobstructed space.
- (d) There should be sufficient space within the vehicle to accommodate a reference wheelchair. The floor area required for the wheelchair should be at least 750mm x 1250mm with minimum headroom over the area of 1350mm. There must be sufficient space, where applicable, to turn

the wheelchair.

- (e) All wheelchair tracking must be fit for purpose and structurally sound.
- (f) A 3 point system for securing the occupant in the wheel chair and a system for effective anchoring of wheelchairs shall be provided within the vehicle in all spaces designated as wheelchair space. Wheelchair anchorage systems and devices must conform to European Directive 76/115 EEC (as amended). Additional hand-holds and a step should be provided
- (g) Either a purpose designed wheelchair access ramp or a purpose designed wheelchair lift must be provided.
- (h) Any purpose designed wheelchair access ramp that is carried must be lightweight and easy to deploy. The ramp shall have visible reference to a safe working load of at least 250kgs. Ramps must be capable of being securely fitted when in use and securely installed in the designated storage area at all other times. Ramps must be free from damage, deformity and sharp edges etc. Ramps must be provided with an anti-slip covering. * Ramps shall be indelibly marked with the vehicle registration number.
- (i) Any purpose designed wheelchair lift shall conform to the Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations 1998 (LOLER). A report, confirming that the lifting equipment is safe to use shall be presented at the time the annual and 6 monthly vehicle inspection certificate is provided to the council. Vehicles will require a certificate that is valid for a period of 6 months from the date of issue. The lift must be capable of being secured in a suitable and satisfactory position when the vehicle is in motion.
- (j) Vehicles shall comply in all respects, and at all times, with current road traffic legislation.
- (k) Vehicles shall comply with the European Community M1 type approval for passenger carrying vehicles. The definition of category M1 type approval is any motor vehicle with at least 4 wheels designed and constructed for the carriage of passengers.
- (l) Vehicles that have been originally classified as complying with M1 type approval but have undergone modifications or conversions since original manufacture will be considered suitable provided they are presented with the relevant National Small Series Type Approval (NSSTA) or Individual Vehicle Approval (IVA) certificate or equivalent issued by the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA).
- (m) Any wheelchair accessible vehicle originally given European Community N type approval will be considered unfit for the purpose and will not be considered suitable to be licensed. The definition of a category N type approval is any motor vehicles with at least four wheels designed and constructed for the carriage of goods.

Grandfather rights will apply to **wheelchair accessible** vehicles already licensed by the date on which this policy comes into effect. They will be allowed to continue until the end of their useful life, subject to their compliance with all relevant test and inspection requirements.

*Grandfather rights do not apply with respect to requirement that ramps are indelibly marked with the vehicle registration number.

(adopted 26 September 2017)

No trailer of any description shall be attached to the licensed vehicle, except in accordance with a written authorisation issued by the Council. Any trailer shall be provided and used in accordance with the Council's Guidance for Hackney Carriage / Private Hire Drivers and Proprietors.

GUIDANCE FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE / PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS AND PROPRIETORS PERMITTING AUTHORISED TRAILERS

- 1) Each trailer will be authorised for use with one nominated licensed vehicle only. Any trailer must be presented for inspection at the Council's Test Centre prior to its first use and again at each inspection of the vehicle with which the trailer is authorised to be used. The trailer must be presented with the vehicle for which its use is authorised. This will ensure that the vehicle, trailer and its attaching mechanism are fit, safe and suitable for use.
- 2) The trailer must only be used on pre-booked journeys when excess luggage is to be carried and not for general use. This condition is to prevent proprietors/drivers using the trailer unnecessarily and causing greater congestion on the roads. Licensed vehicles with trailers are not permitted on the Hackney Carriage Rank at any time.
- 3) The trailer must be of a suitable size to carry excess baggage for the number of people the vehicle is authorised to carry and no larger.
- 4) The trailer must comply with all aspects of current legislation and be of a type recommended by the vehicle manufacturer as being suitable for the intended towing vehicle. This is to ensure that the vehicle with trailer remain fit, safe and suitable for purpose.
- 5) The vehicle must be suitable for towing the intended trailer. This will ensure that the vehicle has an engine large enough to tow the trailer, the brakes are powerful enough to stop the vehicle and trailer safely and that the Gross Trailer Weight (GTW) does not exceed the Towing Capacity of the towing vehicle.
- 6) The trailer must have affixed to it a manufacturer's plate specifying the manufacturer's name and address, the chassis and serial number, the number of axles, maximum weight per axle, nose weight of the coupling, maximum gross weight and the date of manufacture. From 1 January 1997 the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986, Regulation 71A, states that trailers with a maximum design weight not exceeding 750Kgs must be fitted with a plate displaying their year of manufacture in a clearly visible position.
- 7) Unbraked trailers must not exceed 750kgs gross trailer weight or half the towing vehicle's kerb weight. This is to comply with the law in relation to vehicle, trailers and their weights.
- 8) Unbraked trailers (manufactured from 1 January 1997) must have a secondary coupling that will provide some residual steering in the event of an unplanned uncoupling. This device should also prevent the ball coupling hitting the ground in similar circumstances. It must be

connected to the towing vehicle when the trailer is being towed. This is to prevent any unnecessary accidents.

- 9) Braked trailers must be fitted with a parking brake that operates on at least two road wheels on the same axle. At all times it must be capable of being maintained in operation by direct mechanical action without use of hydraulics, electric or pneumatic systems ie push rod or cable action. The efficiency of the handbrake must comply with EEC Directive 71/320/EEC.
- 10) An emergency breakaway cable must be fitted to the parking brake linkage and the other end clipped or fixed round a fixture on the towing vehicle so that, in the event of the trailer becoming detached from the towing vehicle, the cable applies the parking brake automatically before snapping itself.
- 11) All tow bars fitted must be of a type approved by the manufacturer of the vehicle and fitted by an approved agent. This is to ensure that untested tow bars are not fitted to vehicles.
- 12) Trailers must have on the rear, two red sidelights, two red stop lamps, an illuminated number plate and two triangular red reflectors plus indicators designed to flash between 60 and 120 times per minute. All lights must be kept in working order. If more than 1.3 metres wide, they must also have at least one red fog lamp. This is to comply with the requirements of the Road Vehicle Lighting Regulations 1989.
- 13) All trailers built after 30 September 1990 require front reflectors.
- 14) No advertising will be permitted on any part of a trailer. This is to comply with current standards and conditions applicable to private hire and hackney carriage vehicle licensing.
- 15) The trailer must be fitted with securely fastening covers, which can be hardtop or canvas tarpaulin type. This is for safety reasons and drivers should ensure that any luggage is securely fastened so as not to present any danger to other road users, passengers or damage to the luggage.
- 16) When the trailer is used with the licensed vehicle, the licence plate issued by the Council, specifically for that trailer, shall be clearly displayed on the trailer. The details provided on this plate refer to the vehicle it is to be used with and not the trailer itself. This is so that the vehicle can be identified from the rear and also to comply with legislation. The cost of the plate will be the same as that for vehicle plates.
- 17) A spare wheel for the trailer must be carried whilst the trailer is in use so that in the event of a puncture the journey would not be delayed any longer than necessary. Space saver type spare wheels are not permitted.
- 18) The vehicle must be insured to tow the trailer.
- 19) A charge will be made payable for the inspection of the trailer which will be recouped from the proprietor of the vehicle.
- 20) A licensed driver will be permitted to tow a trailer whilst driving a licensed vehicle provided that:

- i) the driver holds the appropriate category on his DVLA licence;
- ii) it is the proprietor's/vehicle licensee's responsibility to ensure that the trailer towed by his vehicle complies with the legislation and the Licensing Conditions;
- iii) it is the proprietor's/vehicle licensee's responsibility to ensure that the driver towing the trailer holds the appropriate category DVLA licence.

This policy is to ensure the driver and vehicle owner complies with the law and other legal requirements.

APPENDIX 'B'

VEHICLE TEST ARRANGEMENTS

Private Hire Vehicle Tests

All vehicle tests, with the exception of stretched limousines, will be carried out by the Council's mechanics at the Fen Road Depot, Fen Road, Frampton Fen, Boston. Stretched limousines will undergo an MOT every 6 months at a testing station nominated by the council (currently the VOSA approved garage at Boston HGV Testing Station Ltd, Riverside Industrial Estate, Marsh Lane, Boston, PE21 7PJ. Telephone 01205 351188). The vehicle will then be presented at the Fen Road Depot for testing for items in addition to the MOT within seven days of the MOT test.

Appointments can be made by telephoning Boston 366736 or in person by calling at the Depot. The Vehicle Test Fee will be payable direct to the garage at the time of the test.

Private Hire Meter Tests

A Private Hire vehicle is not required to fit a taximeter, but if such a meter is fitted it must be correctly calibrated and tested for accuracy. All meter tests are also carried out by the Council's mechanics at the Council Depot. Appointments can be made in person or by telephoning Boston 366736.

N.B. There is a provision on the Certificate of Compliance (Test Certificate) issued by the garage for an entry when the meter has passed the meter test.

Condition of Vehicle

The vehicle must be presented at the Depot in a thoroughly clean condition inside and out.

ALL vehicles for all tests must be fitted with an approved fire extinguisher securely fixed in such a position as to be readily available for use.

In the case of RENEWAL of a licence or a SIX MONTH TEST they must also be fitted with the identification plate, issued by the Council, in the correct place.

The tester may refuse to test a vehicle which in his opinion is unsafe or dangerous. A full list of items to be tested are available on request.

Driver of Vehicle

The driver must remain on the tester's premises whilst the test is being carried out and answer any questions. The driver is not allowed in the test bay without the express consent of the tester.

Vehicle Passes the Test

A Certificate of Compliance will be issued if the tester is satisfied as to the condition of the vehicle.



Vehicle Fails the Test

The driver will be informed of the reasons for failure. A re-test will have to be subsequently carried out on the vehicle; this must be arranged through the Testing Centre. The retest will be done on all items, not just those which failed.

Certificate of Compliance

This **MUST** be collected from the Licensing Office within 10 days. A valid insurance certificate must be provided along with any further fees that may be due, before a licence can be issued.

The Certificate of Compliance is not a substitute MOT Certificate, the exemption only being available when a Vehicle Licence has been issued by the Council.

N.B. Where a licence holder has difficulty in obtaining a Vehicle Excise Licence on production of the Council's Certificate of Compliance, he/she should complete the declaration on Department of Transport Form V112 obtainable from the Post Office.

APPENDIX 'C'

PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE TEST - ITEMS TESTED IN ADDITION TO THE MOT TEST FOR CLASS IV VEHICLES

All vehicles which apply for Private Hire Licence status in the Borough of Boston must adhere strictly to the following specification which is required in addition to the vehicle passing the twice yearly inspection to Department of Transport (MOT Test) standards.

BODYWORK (Exterior)

General Condition

All bodywork must be in good condition and have no visual signs of surface rust showing. All bodywork panels must be free from dents and surface damage.

Paintwork Condition

All paintwork must be in good condition and where there is a requirement to replace doors, boots, bonnets or any body panels these must be returned to the original colour of the vehicle before fitting prior to any inspection.

The Vehicle must display the words 'PRIVATE HIRE ONLY' on the metal panel of both front doors of the vehicle when displaying the business telephone number and/or name of the operator. The words 'PRIVATE HIRE ONLY' must be in lettering at least 5cm (approx.2 inches) in size and be of a neat and consistent standard.

Registration Plates

Registration plates must be complete, clean and free from any damage.

Mirrors, Windows, Glass, etc

All lights, windscreens, windows, direction indicator lenses, reflectors and mirrors must be complete, serviceable, clean and free from any damage. All windscreens and windows must



comply with regulations concerning visual transmission of light and freedom from obstruction to vision and are to be kept clean. Windscreen wipers and washers must be maintained in effective working order at all times.

Blacked out windows will be permitted in the passenger compartment of limousines providing the level of tint complies with any regulations applicable regarding the visual transmission of light for these windows.

BODYWORK (interior)

Seats and Upholstery

All vehicle interiors including seats and upholstery must be in good condition, free from damage, well sprung and be smart in appearance.

Floor Condition

The floor must be sound and covered by adequate carpets or mats. The floor covering should not be as badly worn as would be likely to cause danger to passengers.

Seat Belts

All seat belts, anchorages, fastenings and adjusting devices must be maintained free from obvious defects and kept in good working order.

Panel and Interior Lights

The speedometer should be in working order and be correctly illuminated. All interior and passenger lights, where fitted, should be operative.

Doors and Locks

All doors should open and close easily both from the inside and outside. All doors when shut must be secure. The boot should open easily from the outside.

Window Openings

All windows should open and close by the use of winders or otherwise where fitted.

Tyres

All road wheels and tyres must be the same size except where different sized front and rear wheels and/or tyres are fitted to the vehicle by the manufacturer as standard. (This does not apply when using a space-saver wheel in the circumstances detailed below).

The use, in emergencies only, due to puncture, wheel damage or similar, of a space-saver wheel, run flat tyre(s) (when punctured) or puncture repair kits is permitted for vehicles that are manufactured and delivered with such tyres or kits as standard.

In the event of a space-saver tyre, run flat tyre(s) (when punctured) or puncture repair kit being used, it is only to complete a fare and precise compliance with the manufacturer's recommendations is required. Any such space-saver tyre, run flat

tyre (when punctured) or tyre that has been subject to use of a puncture repair kit must be replaced prior to taking another fare.

In cases where a rear loading wheelchair accessible conversion or an LPG conversion where the tank occupies the usual site of the spare wheel is considered suitable to be licensed, the vehicle will be considered exempt from the requirement to carry a spare wheel matching those fitted to the vehicle. This would be subject to the vehicle meeting the luggage criteria and being approved by specialist converters. In these instances a space-saver tyre or puncture repair kit must be carried in the vehicle for use in the event of the above mentioned emergencies only and must be used precisely with the manufacturer's recommendations.

All other licensed vehicles must carry a spare wheel matching those fitted to the vehicle.

Space-saver tyres and full size spare wheels must have a legal tread depth, be kept inflated to the correct pressure and be free from cuts, bulges and any defects. An appropriate means of changing the wheel must also be carried.

Fire Extinguisher

The vehicle must be fitted with a fire extinguisher (in proper working order) securely fixed in such a position as to be readily available for use.

Exhaust System

The exhaust system must be complete, efficient and not produce any excess noise and smoke.

SIX MONTH TEST AND RENEWAL OF LICENCE

Exterior Council Plate

The vehicle must be fitted with the identification plate issued by the Council. The plate should be attached to the rear of the vehicle, below window level in a vertical plane (as near as possible) facing to the rear, with none of the plate concealed whatsoever.

Fire Extinguisher

The fire extinguisher must be indelibly and clearly marked with the Council vehicle plate number (issued in respect of the vehicle).

APPENDIX 'D'

APPENDIX E

**BOSTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
APPLICATION POLICY AND GUIDELINES RELATING TO THE RELEVANCE OF CONVICTIONS
HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS AND PRIVATE HIRE OPERATORS**



1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance on the criteria which are taken into account by the council (Licensing Authority) when determining whether or not an applicant or an existing licence holder is a fit and proper person to hold a hackney carriage and/or private hire driver licence. The policy also relates to applicants for a private hire vehicle operator licence and holders of a current private hire operator licence.

1.2 The overriding aim of the licensing authority is to protect the safety of the public. The licensing authority is concerned to ensure:

- That a person is a fit and proper person.
- That the person does not pose a threat to the public.
- That the public are safeguarded from dishonest persons.
- The safeguarding of children, young persons and vulnerable adults.
- That the policy ensures fair access, eliminates unlawful discrimination and promotes equality in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty and the 'protected characteristics' - age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

1.3 This policy provides guidance to any person with an interest in public and private hire licensing. In particular, but not exclusively:

- Applicants for driver and operator licences
- Existing licensed drivers and operators whose licences are being reviewed or renewed.
- Licensing officers
- Members of the Regulatory & Appeals Committee
- Magistrates hearing appeals against local authority decisions

1.4 Where licensing officers have delegated powers to grant licences, they will utilise these guidelines when making a decision whether or not to grant a licence. Should there be any doubt, in the Officer's opinion, as to whether the applicant is a "fit and proper" person, then the application will not be granted under delegated power. Such applications will be referred to the Council's Regulatory & Appeals Committee, or a sub-committee of that committee. The Regulatory & Appeals Committee is made up of elected members (councillors). Whilst officers and the committee will have regard to the guidelines contained in the policy, each case will be considered on its individual merits and, where the circumstances warrant, the committee or officer may depart from the guidelines. The reasons for departing from the guidelines must be recorded in the decision.

2. General policy

2.1 There may be occasions where it is appropriate to depart from the guidelines, for example, where the offence is a one-off occasion or there are mitigating circumstances or alternatively where there are many or continuous offences which may show a pattern of offending and unfitness. However, the overriding consideration should always be the protection of the public.

- 2.2 A person with a relevant conviction need not be automatically barred from obtaining a licence, but would be expected to show adequate evidence that he or she is a fit and proper person to hold a licence (the onus is on the applicant to produce such evidence). Simply remaining free of conviction may not generally be regarded as adequate evidence that a person is a fit and proper person to hold a licence.
- 2.3 A series of offences over a period of time is more likely to give cause for concern than an isolated, minor conviction. A serious view will be taken when an applicant shows a pattern of offending and/or unfitness.
- 2.4 Where an applicant has been convicted of a criminal offence, the licensing authority cannot review the merits of the conviction [Nottingham City Council v. Mohammed Farooq (1998)] or determine that the applicant should never have been convicted.
- 2.5 A person with a conviction(s) for sexual offences or any other very serious crime will not normally be issued with a licence.
- 2.6 The Council generally considers that, on some occasions, offence(s) committed by a licensed hackney carriage/private hire driver may need to be considered more seriously than an offence(s) committed by individuals who are not. This is because current licensees have previously been judged as fit and proper and are aware of the standards required of them and are expected to maintain those high standards of personal conduct.
- 2.7 **Cautions** – Adult cautions are not regarded as convictions, but being admissions of guilt, may be taken into consideration by the Licensing Authority.
- 2.8 **Private Hire Operators** – In view of the significant responsibility held by private hire vehicle operators in terms of setting standards of their company, recruiting drivers and dealing with members of the public, the operator must be a fit and proper person and an example to those whom he/she employs. Therefore the view of the Licensing Authority is that applicants for a private hire operator's licence (and the holders of a private hire operator's licence) must at least fulfil the same requirements as applicants for private hire driver licences in terms of being free from serious convictions or a pattern of unlawful behaviour.

3. Pre-requisites to making an application

- 3.1 It is the policy of the licensing authority that every application for a licence, including applications from existing licence holders, to drive a Hackney Carriage and/or Private Hire Vehicle must be accompanied by satisfactory evidence of the following matters (and that applications that are incomplete will not be deemed to have been made until such time as they are completed) -
- That the applicant has the right to live and work in the country. (All applicants).
 - An Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Services criminal record check and evidence that they are not on a child and/or vulnerable adult barring list. Applicants who have lived overseas for 6 continuous months or more refer to paragraphs 3.2 & 3.3. (All applicants)
 - A certificate of their current medical fitness to DVLA Group 2 standard. (See paragraph 3.4)

- A FULL UK or EU driving licence or legal equivalent (if an EU Licence a paper counterpart issued by DVLA must be obtained and produced with the application). (All applicants)
- That the applicant is authorised to drive a vehicle of the same classification as that which the licence will allow them to drive. (All applicants)
- That the applicant has a minimum of two year's post qualification driving experience. (Not required for licence renewals)
- The applicant must have satisfactorily completed the Licensing Authority's comprehension test. (Not required for licence renewals)
- In the case of applications for hackney carriage drivers, they have passed the Licensing Authority's knowledge test. (Not required for licence renewals).
- That the applicant has completed the Licensing Authority's safeguarding awareness training. (New applicants and existing applicants prior to their next renewal).
- The applicant has signed a declaration to confirm that they understand the Driver Code of Conduct forms part of the Licensing Authority's Policy. (All applicants)

3.2 It is the policy of the Licensing Authority that every applicant for a licence to drive a hackney carriage and/or private hire vehicle must produce evidence of a current and up to date Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check and evidence that they are not on a child and/or vulnerable adult barring list. Applicants for a private hire vehicle operator licence, who do not hold a hackney carriage/private hire driver licence with this authority, will be required to present, at their expense, the result of a current and up to date Basic Disclosure Check from Disclosure Scotland. Any enhanced or basic disclosure that is more than 1 month old will not be accepted (except for enhanced disclosures when used in conjunction with the update service and the disclosure was less than 1 month old when first presented for the purpose of obtaining a hackney carriage/private hire vehicle driver licence).

3.3 Before an application can be made, if an applicant has spent six continuous months or more overseas the licensing authority will expect to see evidence of a criminal record check, certificate of good conduct or equivalent, obtained for the purpose of applying for a Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle Driver or Operator Licence with this council, from the country/countries covering the relevant period.

Such criminal record checks/certificates of good conduct must be provided in accordance with the Home Office Document *"Application processes for Foreign National Criminality Information"*. Any criminal record check must be translated into English by a recognised translation service provider that has been agreed by the Licensing Authority.

3.4 All applicants making their first application must lodge a certified medical certificate. A medical certificate will then be required every six years thereafter, unless an applicant's condition warrants examination on a more regular basis.

An applicant aged 65 years or over must undergo the medical examination every year.

As recommended by the Medical Commission on Accident Prevention the authority requires licence holders to attain DVLA Group 2 Vocational Licence Standard.

Any fee charged by the Doctor is payable by the applicant.

A Medical Practitioner who has full knowledge of the applicant's medical history must carry out the examination.

Where the Medical Practitioner cannot carry out the eye test this part of the medical form must be completed and the form signed by an optician prior to the medical being carried out.

Medical certificate forms and further information can be obtained from the Licensing Section.

Any applicant who does not meet the DVLA Group 2 Vocational Licence Standard can expect to have their application refused.

Licensed drivers who no longer meet the DVLA Group 2 Vocational Licence Standard either temporarily or permanently must notify the Licensing Authority forthwith. In such cases the driver can expect to have their licence either suspended or revoked. Guidance on the DVLA Group 2 Vocational Licence Standards is available from the Licensing Authority.

The Council will not normally accept a certified medical certificate submitted with an application, which is received more than 6 weeks after the Doctor has signed the report.

4. Appeals

- 4.1 Any applicant refused a driver's licence has a right to appeal to the Magistrates' Court within 21 days of the notice of refusal [Local Government Miscellaneous Provisions Act 1976, s 77 (1)].
- 4.2 Any applicant refused an operator licence on the grounds that the licensing authority is not satisfied he/she is a fit and proper person to hold such a licence has a right to appeal to the Magistrates' Court within 21 days of the notice of refusal.
- 4.3 Any licensee whose licence is suspended or revoked has a right to appeal to the Magistrates' Court within 21 days of the notice of suspension or revocation. Where suspension or revocation is immediate, on the grounds of public safety, the driver cannot continue to drive a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle during the period of appeal.

5. Powers – Suspension, Revocation or Refusal to Renew a Licence.

- 5.1 Section 61 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allows the Licensing Authority to suspend, revoke or refuse to renew a hackney carriage /private hire driver licence if the applicant/licence holder has been convicted of:
 - An offence involving dishonesty, indecency or violence; or
 - Failure to comply with the provisions of the Town Police Clauses Act 1847; or

- Failure to comply with the provisions of Part II of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

The Licensing Authority may also suspend, revoke or refuse to renew on the grounds of any other reasonable cause

Where it is in the interests of public safety to suspend or revoke a licence that suspension or revocation can be with immediate effect provided that there are justifiable grounds to do so. The driver will be given a notice of the suspension or revocation which will include a statement that the determination takes immediate effect along with an explanation as to why that is the case.

5.2 Section 62 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 allows the Licensing Authority to suspend, revoke or refuse to renew a Private Hire Vehicle Operator Licence if the applicant/licence holder had been convicted of failure to comply with the provisions of Part II of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. The Licensing Authority may also act on any of the following grounds:

- Conduct which appears to render him/her unfit to hold a licence;
- Any material change in the circumstances of the operator; or
- Any other reasonable cause.

5.3 The Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions)(Amendment) Order 2002, allows the licensing authority to take into account all convictions recorded against an applicant or the holder of a hackney carriage/private hire vehicle driver licence, whether spent or not. Therefore the licensing authority may have regard to all relevant convictions (as defined in this policy), particularly where there is a long history of offending or a pattern of repeat offending. However, before having regard to such a spent conviction the Licensing Authority will first consider whether the conviction is relevant to the licence application.

5.4 In this policy the term “disqualification” refers to the period served, to take account of the fact that a period of disqualification from driving may be reduced upon the successful completion of a relevant driver rehabilitation course. An applicant must provide the Licensing Authority with sufficient evidence to prove that the period of disqualifications was so reduced.

6. Consideration of disclosed criminal history

6.1 Under the provisions of Sections 51, 55, and 59, Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the licensing authority is required to ensure that an applicant for the grant or renewal of a licence to drive a hackney carriage and/or a private hire vehicle and/or a private hire vehicle operator’s licence is a ‘fit and proper’ person to hold such a licence. The Authority must not grant a licence unless it is satisfied that the applicant is a fit and proper person to hold it.

All conviction(s), criminal findings of guilt (including fixed penalty ticket(s)), caution(s) and warning(s), whether for motoring or other offences and County Court Judgment(s)/Order(s) (where the judgment or order relates to a debt or charge to another Hackney Carriage/Private Hire driver, owner or operator) may potentially be taken into account when deciding whether to grant a licence or on a review after the issue of a licence. During the currency of a licence the licensee must immediately after the date of

arrest, convictions, criminal findings of guilt (including fixed penalty notice(s)), caution(s) and/or warnings, advise the Licensing Authority of this information in writing.

The Licensing Authority will consider:

- How relevant the offence(s) are to the licence being applied for (or licence being reviewed).
- The seriousness of the offence(s).
- When the offence(s) were committed.
- The date of conviction.
- Circumstances of the individual concerned
- Sentence imposed by the court.
- The applicant's age at the time of conviction.
- Whether they form part of a pattern of offending.
- Any other character check considered reasonable (e.g. personal references).
- Any other factors that might be relevant.

6.2 Applicants for a first time licence can discuss what effect a caution/conviction or other sanction may have on any licence application by contacting the licensing office in confidence for advice.

6.3 The licensing authority requires enhanced disclosures from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) from any applicant for a driver licence. The licensing authority follows the DBS's Code of Practice on the fair use of disclosure information and abides by the DBS's Policy on the secure storage, handling, use, retention and disposal of disclosure information. Both of these documents are available on request.

6.4 Applicants applying for the grant or a renewal of a drivers' licence and/or operator licence will be required to obtain an enhanced disclosure at their own expense.

6.5 The licensing authority encourages applicants and licence holders to register for the DBS's update service and to nominate the licensing authority to receive updates. DBS certificates obtained for a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver Licence cannot be used for the purpose of obtaining a Lincolnshire County Council School Transport Badge ("Green Badge") and vice versa. DBS certificates obtained for any other purpose, including a Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver Licence with another Licensing Authority, cannot be used for the purpose of obtaining a licence with this Licensing Authority. A separate check is required for each authorisation. However, applicants can register both/all checks with the DBS update service for a single fee.

6.6 The licensing authority is also entitled to use other records and information that may be available to it in determining applications or an entitlement to continue holding a licence. This may include information held by the licensing authority or other licensing authorities, and information disclosed by the police.

6.8 It is an offence for any person knowingly or recklessly to make a false declaration or to deliberately omit any relevant material in submitting information required by the application for a licence. Where an applicant has made a false statement or a false declaration on their application for the grant or renewal of a licence, the licence may be refused or revoked.

7 Serious offences involving violence

- 7.1 Licensed drivers have close regular contact with the public. A firm line will be taken with those who have convictions for offences involving violence. An application will normally be refused if the applicant has a conviction for an offence that involved the loss of life unless the circumstances are exceptional.
- 7.2 Given the wide range of the offences that involve violence, consideration will be given to the nature and type of the conviction.
- 7.3 Unless there are exceptional circumstances a licence will not normally be granted where the applicant has a conviction for an offence such as:

- Murder
- Manslaughter
- Any culpable homicide while driving
- Terrorism offences
- Arson
- Malicious wounding or grievous bodily harm which is racially aggravated
- Grievous bodily harm with intent
- Or any offence of attempting, conspiring to commit, aiding and abetting or procuring any of the above offences or any offence which may replace the above or be considered as serious as the above.

A hackney carriage/private hire driver found guilty of any of the above offences at paragraph 7.3 should expect to have his/her licence revoked immediately.

- 7.4 A licence will not normally be granted where the applicant has a conviction for an offence below and the conviction is less than 10 years prior to the date of application:

- Actual bodily harm which is racially aggravated.
- Grievous bodily harm
- Robbery.
- Possession of a firearm.
- Riot.
- Assault of a Police Officer
- Common assault which is racially aggravated
- Violent disorder.
- Resisting arrest.
- Or any offence of attempting, conspiring to commit, aiding and abetting or procuring any of the above offences or any offence which may replace the above or be considered as serious as the above.

A hackney carriage/private hire driver found guilty of any of the above offences at paragraph 7.4 should expect to have his/her licence revoked immediately and not be considered for the grant of a licence until a minimum period of 10 years since conviction (or completion of sentence if longer) has elapsed.

7.5 A licence will not normally be granted where the applicant has a conviction for an offence and the conviction is less than 5 years prior to the date of application:

- Racially-aggravated criminal damage.
- Any other racially-aggravated offence.
- Or any offence of attempting, conspiring to commit, aiding and abetting or procuring any of the above offences or any offence which may replace the above or be considered as serious as the above.

A hackney carriage/private hire driver found guilty of any of the above offences at paragraph 7.5 should expect to have his/her licence revoked and not be considered for the grant of a licence until a minimum period of 10 years since conviction (or completion of sentence if longer) has elapsed.

7.6 A licence will not normally be granted where the applicant has a conviction for an offence and the conviction is less than 3 years prior to the date of application:

- Common assault
- Assault occasioning actual bodily harm
- Affray
- S5 Public Order Act 1986 offence (harassment, alarm or distress)
- S.4 Public Order Act 1986 offence (fear of provocation of violence)
- S4A Public Order Act 1986 offence (intentional harassment, alarm or distress)
- Obstruction
- Criminal damage
- Or any offence of attempting, conspiring to commit, aiding and abetting or procuring any of the above offences or any offence which may replace the above or be considered as serious as the above.

A hackney carriage/private hire driver found guilty of any of the above offences at paragraph 7.6 should expect to have his/her licence revoked immediately and not be considered for the grant of a licence until a minimum period of 5 years since conviction (or completion of sentence if longer) has elapsed.

7.7 A licence will not normally be granted if an applicant has more than one conviction in the last 10 years for an offence of a violent nature.

7.8 In the event of a licence being granted, a strict warning both verbally and in writing should be administered.

7.9 **Fixed Penalty Notices (Public Order Offence)** – The Licensing Authority recognises that in some instance a Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) may be issued for a public order offence rather the option of prosecution through the courts or acceptance of a caution. A serious view will be taken of the existence of a FPN for a public order offence. In certain circumstances where a FPN has been issued it may be appropriate for the Licensing Authority to issue a strong warning regarding future conduct rather than the refusal of a licence application or suspension/revocation of a licence. The existence of more than one FPN will raise serious concerns regarding an individual's suitability to act as a licensed driver.

8. Possession of a weapon

- 8.1 If an applicant has been convicted of possession of a weapon or any other weapon related offence, this will give rise to serious concern as to whether the person is fit to carry the public. Depending on the circumstances of the offence, an applicant should be free of conviction for at least 3 years (or since completion of the sentence if longer) before an application for a licence is considered.
- 8.2 A hackney carriage/private hire vehicle driver found guilty of an offence involving a weapon(s) should expect to have his/her licence revoked immediately and not be considered for the grant of a licence until a minimum period of 5 years since conviction (or completion of sentence if longer) has elapsed.

9. Sex and indecency offences

- 9.1 Licensed drivers often carry unaccompanied and vulnerable passengers, therefore applicants with convictions for sexual offences will normally be refused a licence.
- 9.2 In particular, an application will normally be refused where the applicant has a conviction for a sexual or indecency offence(s) such as:
- Rape
 - Assault by penetration
 - Offences involving children or vulnerable adults
 - Sexual assault
 - Indecent assault
 - Exploitation of prostitution
 - Trafficking for sexual exploitation
 - Any offence involving child sexual exploitation and/or sexual exploitation of vulnerable adults
 - Possession of indecent photographs, child pornography etc.
 - Any sex or indecency offence that was committed in the course of employment as a hackney carriage/private hire vehicle driver
 - Indecent exposure
 - Soliciting (kerb crawling)
 - Or any offence of attempting, conspiring to commit, aiding and abetting or procuring any of the above offences or any offence which may replace the above or be considered as serious as the above.
- 9.3 A hackney carriage/private hire vehicle driver found guilty of a sexual or indecency offence during the period of a licence should expect to have his/her licence revoked immediately. It is unlikely that anyone in this situation will ever be licensed again.
- 9.3 In addition to the above the licensing authority will not normally grant a licence to any applicant who is currently on the Sex Offenders Register.

10. Dishonesty

10.1 Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle drivers are expected to be persons of trust. The widespread practice of delivering unaccompanied property, taking children to school and families on holiday, is indicative of the trust that people place in drivers. Moreover, it is comparatively easy for a dishonest driver to defraud the public by demanding more than the legal fare etc. Overseas visitors can be confused by the change in currency and become "fair game" for an unscrupulous driver. Similarly, any customer can be defrauded by a driver taking them by any other than the shortest route or by any lost property being kept by an unscrupulous driver. For these reasons a serious view should be taken of any conviction involving dishonesty.

10.2 Normally, a minimum period of 5 years free of conviction (or from completion of sentence if longer) should be required before granting a licence. Offences involving dishonesty include:

- theft
- burglary
- fraud
- benefit fraud
- handling or receiving stolen goods
- forgery
- conspiracy to defraud
- obtaining money or property by deception
- other deception
- taking a vehicle without consent
- and any similar offences
- Or any offence of attempting, conspiring to commit, aiding and abetting or procuring any of the above offences or any offence which may replace the above or be considered as serious as the above.

A licensed hackney carriage/private hire vehicle driver found guilty of a dishonesty offence should expect to have his/her licence revoked and not be considered for the grant of a licence until a minimum period of 5 years after conviction (or completion of sentence if longer).

10.3 A licence will not normally be granted if an applicant has more than one conviction for a dishonesty offence.

11. Drugs

11.1 A serious view will be taken of any drug related offence.

11.2 A licence will not normally be granted where the applicant has a conviction for an offence related to the supply of drugs and has not been free of conviction for at least 5 years or at least 5 years from the completion of sentence if longer.

- 11.3 A licence will not normally be granted where the applicant has a conviction for an offence related to the possession of drugs and has not been free of conviction (or completion of sentence if longer) for at least 3 years.
- 11.4 If there is evidence of persistent drugs use, misuse or dependency a specialist medical examination (in accordance with DVLA Group 2 medical standards) may be required before an application is considered. If the applicant was an addict then they would normally be required to show evidence of at least 5 years free from drug taking after detoxification treatment.
- 11.5 A licence will not normally be granted if an applicant has more than one conviction for a drugs related offence.
- 11.6 A hackney carriage/private hire vehicle driver found guilty of driving whilst under the influence of drugs, or found guilty of any drug-related offence should expect to have his/her drivers licence revoked immediately and not be considered for the grant of a licence until free of conviction (or completion of sentence if longer) for at least 5 years.

12 Driving offences involving the loss of life

- 12.1 A very serious view will be taken of any applicant who has been convicted of a driving offence that resulted in the loss of life.

A licence will not normally be granted where the applicant has a conviction for an offence such as:

- Causing death by dangerous driving
- Causing death by careless driving whilst under the influence of drink or drugs
- Causing death driving: unlicensed, disqualified or uninsured drivers
- or any similar offences

A hackney carriage/private hire driver found guilty of any of the above offences should expect to have his/her licence revoked immediately.

13 Drink driving or driving under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol

- 13.1 **In a motor vehicle** - A serious view will be taken of convictions for driving or being in charge of a vehicle while under the influence of drink or drugs. An isolated incident may not necessarily permanently bar an applicant but strict warnings should be given as to future behaviour. More than one conviction for such offences should give rise to serious doubts as to the applicant's fitness to hold a licence.
- 13.2 At least 3 years should elapse (after the restoration of the DVLA driving licence) before an applicant is considered for a licence. If there is any suggestion that the applicant is alcohol dependent, a special medical examination should be arranged before the application is considered. If the applicant is found to be alcohol dependent, a period of 5 years should elapse after treatment is complete before an application/further licence application is considered.

A Hackney Carriage/Private Hire Driver found guilty of a drink-driving offence or found guilty of driving whilst under the influence of drugs should expect to have his/her drivers licence revoked immediately and not be considered for the grant of a licence until at least 5 years after restoration of the DVLA driving licence.

- 13.3 **With a licensed vehicle** - A driver found guilty of a drink-driving offence or driving whilst under the influence of drugs whilst carrying passengers in a licensed vehicle should expect to have his/her driver's licence revoked immediately and not be considered for the grant of a licence until a minimum period of 7 years after the restoration of the DVLA driving licence.

14. Major Traffic Offences

- 14.1 An isolated conviction for dangerous driving or driving without due care and attention or similar offences should normally merit a strong warning as to future driving and advice on the standard expected of hackney carriage/private hire vehicle drivers. More than one conviction for this type of offence within the last two years should merit refusal and no further application should be considered until a period of 3 years free from convictions has elapsed.

- 14.2 Similarly, a first conviction during the period of a hackney carriage/private hire vehicle drivers licence will indicate that the driver may have ceased to be a fit and proper person and will lead to either a licence suspension or to a warning as to future conduct. Where there are subsequent convictions revocation of the licence will be considered with no further application being considered until a period of 3 years from conviction has elapsed.

- 14.3 **Applicants/drivers who have been disqualified from driving due to major traffic offences (Not involving the loss of life)** – Existing drivers can expect to have their licence revoked. At least 3 years should elapse (after the restoration of the DVLA Licence) before an individual is considered for a hackney carriage/private hire vehicle driver's licence.

15 *Insurance offences (with a motor vehicle)*

- 15.1 A serious view will be taken of convictions for using, or causing or permitting the use of a motor vehicle without insurance. An isolated incident in the past will not necessarily prevent a licence being granted provided the applicant has been free of conviction for at least 3 years. However, a strict warning should be given as to future conduct.

- 15.2 A licence will not normally be granted if an applicant has more than one conviction for an insurance related offence.

- 15.3 A licensed driver found guilty of driving passengers in a licensed vehicle without insurance should expect to have his/her hackney carriage or private hire vehicle driver licence revoked and not be considered for another licence for at least 5 years.

- 15.3 An operator found guilty of causing or permitting the driving of passengers for hire and reward whilst without insurance will normally have his operator licence revoked and will not be considered for holding a licence for at least 5 years.

16 Using a mobile phone whilst driving

- 16.1 Applicants (and licence holders) should be aware of the serious risk posed by driving whilst using a mobile phone. There is a substantial body of which shows that drivers who use a mobile phone suffer physical and cognitive distraction which means they:
- are much less aware of what's happening on the road around them
 - fail to see road signs
 - fail to maintain proper lane position and steady speed
 - are more likely to 'tailgate' the vehicle in front
 - react more slowly, take longer to brake and longer to stop
 - are more likely to enter unsafe gaps in traffic
 - feel more stressed and frustrated.
- 16.2 There is evidence to show that drivers who use a mobile phone have slower reaction times than those who have consumed alcohol up to the legal limit. In light of this a serious view should be taken of convictions for driving whilst using a mobile phone.
- 16.3 Any applicant for a new licence who has, within the 3 years preceding the licence application, been convicted for an offence of using a mobile phone whilst driving will be referred to a sub-committee of the Regulatory & Appeals committee for their application to be considered. Their application may be refused and will normally be refused where there is more than one conviction for this offence.
- 16.4 A licensed driver who is convicted for an offence of using a mobile phone whilst driving will be referred to a sub-committee of the Regulatory & Appeals Committee and can expect the suspension or revocation of their licence.

17. OTHER TRAFFIC OFFENCES

New Applicants.

- 17.1 Any conviction for other traffic offences, (e.g. obstruction, waiting in a restricted street, speeding etc) should not normally prevent a person from proceeding with an application. However, the number, type and frequency of this kind of offence will be taken into account. In certain instances it may be appropriate to issue a licence together with a strong warning as to future driving standards. If a significant history of offences is disclosed, refusal of an application may result.
- 17.2 New applicants who have received 9 or more DVLA penalty points (in respect of minor traffic offences) on their driving licence during the 12 months prior to the date of application may be refused.
- 17.3 Applicants who have been disqualified from driving under the "totting-up" procedure will not normally be granted a licence unless they have held a licence for at least 2 years following the expiry period of the disqualification and can show a significant improvement in history of motoring offences during that period.

Existing Licence Holders

- 17.4 A hackney carriage/private hire vehicle driver receiving 6 or more penalty points during any 3 year period will be issued with a written warning as to future conduct.
- 17.5 Any current driver disqualified from holding a DVLA licence under the “totting-up” procedure should expect to have his/her hackney carriage/private hire vehicle driver licence revoked. At least 3 years should then elapse (after the restoration of the DVLA licence) before he/she is considered for a licence and then a licence should only be granted if he/she can show a significant improvement in a history of motoring offences during that period.
- 17.6 In the case of an existing hackney carriage/private hire vehicle driver where the “totting-up” disqualification of a DVLA licence is considered by the court, even if the court does not disqualify, the Council is likely to revoke the hackney carriage/private hire vehicle driver licence. At least 3 years should elapse either after the date of consideration by the court or restoration of the DVLA licence, whichever is the longer, before the individual is considered for a licence.
- 17.7 In the case of an existing hackney carriage/private hire vehicle driver, who show a pattern of driving endorsements, the Licensing Authority reserves the right to require such a driver to successfully undergo the DSA Taxi and Private Hire Driver Driving Assessment or the Taxi and Private Hire Driving Assessment provided by the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership and attain a low risk assessment (or other assessment by a similar body approved by the Licensing Authority).
- 17.8 Any driver who receives a short period disqualification can expect to receive a warning regarding future conduct and may also be required to attend the DSA Taxi and Private Hire Driver Driving Assessment or the Taxi and Private Hire Driving Assessment provided by the Lincolnshire Road Safety Partnership and attain a low risk assessment (or other assessment by a similar body approved by the Licensing Authority). In cases where the drivers licence is already endorsed with penalty points the driver can expect their licence to be suspended along with a requirement to attend an assessment course. In cases where there is a pattern of offences the driver can expect their licence to be revoked and not be considered for another licence for at least 3 years.

18 Drunkenness (Not in a Motor Vehicle)

- 18.1 A single conviction for drunkenness need not debar an applicant from gaining a licence. However, a number of convictions for drunkenness could indicate a medical problem necessitating critical examination. In some cases, a warning may be sufficient.
- 18.2 In cases of severe alcohol abuse, a period of 5 years after the last conviction must elapse before an application is considered and then only after examination by a consultant with a special interest in such cases with confirmation being provided of satisfactory liver enzyme tests and mean cell volume (MCV).

19 Licensing offences

- 19.1 One of the main purposes of the licensing regime is to ensure the protection of the public. For this reason a serious view is taken of convictions for offences, or a possible pattern of unlawful behaviour, under the hackney carriage and private hire licensing regime.
- 19.2 Certain offences under hackney carriage legislation such as plying for hire without a hackney carriage licence, overcharging and refusing to carry disabled persons would normally result in refusal to grant

or renew a licence until a period of at least 3 years has passed since conviction. A licensed driver with such a conviction can expect their licence to be revoked and not be considered for another licence for at least 3 years.

- 19.3 A licence will not normally be granted if an applicant has more than one conviction for a licensing related offence, or in the case of an existing licence holder, suspension or revocation can be expected.

20 Smokefree – Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles

- 20.1 Any hackney carriage/private hire vehicle driver who receives a first fixed penalty notice or fine for smoking in a licensed vehicle will be issued with a warning as regards to future conduct.

- 20.2 Any hackney carriage/private hire vehicle driver receiving two or more fixed penalty notices or fines during any three year period for smoking in a licensed vehicle will be reported to a sub-committee of the Regulatory & Appeals Committee who may consider suspension or revocation of his/her driver licence(s).

21 Perverting or attempting to pervert or conspiring to pervert the Course of Justice

- 21.1 At least 3 years should elapse since conviction (or completion of sentence if longer) before an applicant is considered for a licence.

- 21.2 A licence holder found guilty of such an offence should expect to have his/her licence revoked and not be re-considered for a licence until a minimum period of 5 years has elapsed since conviction (or completion of sentence if longer).

22 Outstanding charges or summonses

- 22.1 If the individual is the subject of an outstanding charge or summons their application can be processed, but the application will be reviewed at the conclusion of any outstanding proceedings. However, if the outstanding charge or summons involves a serious offence then in the interests of public safety the application may be put on hold until proceedings are concluded or the licence may be refused.

23 Non-conviction information

- 23.1 If an applicant has, on more than one occasion, been arrested or charged, but not convicted, for a serious offence which suggests he/she could be a danger to the public, consideration should be given to refusing the application.

- 23.2 In assessing the action to take, the safety of the travelling public shall be the paramount concern.

24 Once a licence has been granted

- 24.1 If a licence holder's conduct is such that, were they to be applying for a new licence their application would normally be refused, they should expect consideration to be given as to the suspension or revocation of their licence.

- 24.2 Unless otherwise stated, all of the preceding contents of this policy document apply equally to current hackney carriage/private hire vehicle drivers as they do to licence applicants

25 Licences issued by other licensing authorities

- 25.1 Applicants who already hold a licence with another licensing authority should not assume that a similar application will be granted by this Authority. Each case will be decided on its own merits.
- 25.2 Licensees who are licensed by more than one authority are expected to inform each of those authorities about every licence they hold and to advise each authority of any changes in this respect. Licence holders should expect those authorities to share information regarding their conduct and to take it into account as appropriate.

26 Conclusion

- 26.1 To conclude, a criminal history in itself may not automatically result in refusal of a licence and a current conviction for a serious crime need not bar an applicant permanently from becoming licensed. As the preceding paragraphs indicate, in most cases, an applicant will be expected to remain free from conviction for between 3 to 10 years, according to circumstances, before an application can be considered. However, there may be occasions when an application can be allowed before 3 years free from conviction have elapsed. For the most serious crimes, except in exceptional circumstances, a licence will not normally be granted.
- 26.2 While it is possible that an applicant may have a number of convictions that, individually, would not prevent him/her from being licensed, the overall offending history will be considered when assessing an applicant's suitability to be licensed. A series of offences over a period of time is more likely to give cause for concern than an isolated minor conviction. Obviously some discretion may be afforded if an offence is isolated and there are mitigating circumstances, but the overriding consideration is the protection of the public. This consideration is vital because hackney carriage/private hire licence holders have unprecedented access to the public and are in a position to exercise control over individuals including children and vulnerable adults.
- 26.3 The Council generally considers that offences committed by licensed hackney carriage/private hire vehicle drivers should be considered more seriously than offences committed by individuals who are not licensed. This is because current licensees have previously been judged as fit and proper and are aware of the standards required of them and are expected to maintain those high standards of personal conduct.
- 26.4 Whilst officers and the committee will have regard to the guidelines contained in the policy, each case will be considered on its individual merits and, where the circumstances demand, the committee/officer may depart from the guidelines.

DISCLOSURE(S) FROM THE DISCLOSURE & BARRING SERVICE

**APPLICANTS FOR HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE
DRIVERS' LICENCES**

As Boston Borough Council meets the requirements in respect of exempted questions under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, all applicants for a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle drivers licence may be subject to a criminal record disclosure from the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) before a licence is granted. This will include details of cautions, reprimands or final warnings, as well as convictions.

SCOPE

1. The legislation provides that local authorities with responsibilities under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 may require applicants for a hackney carriage or private hire vehicle (PHV) drivers licence to apply for a Criminal Records Disclosure.

DISCLOSURE & BARRING SERVICE (DBS) DISCLOSURE

2. In all cases the DBS Disclosure will be made against Government Records and the national collection of criminal records maintained on the Police National Computer (PNC). A fee (for each individual enquiry) is payable to the DBS at the time the request for a Disclosure is made.

LEAD COUNTER SIGNATORY

3. An officer in the Council will take responsibility for use of the Disclosure Service. He or she will be responsible for:-
 - Overseeing the operation of the disclosure procedure within the authority and act as the principal point of contact with the DBS;
 - Ensuring that disclosure requests fall within the terms of the legislation;
 - Ensuring that requests are made at the right time;
 - Ensuring that the provisions of Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 are observed;
 - Ensuring that information received from the DBS is released only to those who need to see it;
 - Ensuring that records are kept securely and for no longer than is necessary;
 - Specify additional Countersignatories to assist in the Disclosure application process.

ROLES OF THE COUNTERSIGNATORY

4. All countersignatories will be required to:
 - Countersign applications and receive the Disclosures;
 - Control the use of, access to and security of disclosures;
 - Confirm the details of the documentary evidence requested by the DBS, to establish the identity of the applicant applying for the Disclosure;
 - Ensure compliance with the Code of Practice; and
 - Ensure the position is covered by the exceptions Order to the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 and the Disclosure requested is at the appropriate level

PROCEDURE

5. DBS Disclosures form an integral and important part of the licensing procedures. Other checks, however, to establish a person's integrity and fitness to hold a licence to drive a hackney carriage or PHV will be carried out, and attempts may be made to account satisfactorily for any unexplained gaps in residential addresses.
6. In considering applications from potential licence holders the Council are aware that applicants have to reveal offences which are spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974, and these may be included in any record provided by the DBS. The Council reserves the right to act as a judicial authority in the case of spent conviction(s) involving serious offences (ie death by dangerous driving, drugs, violence, sexual offences or offences of a habitual nature). This means that, the Council may take these into account when they come to light.
7. An applicant will be required to undertake a DBS Disclosure. He/she will be informed in writing when a Disclosure is required.

The Boston Borough Council area is predominately a rural area with limited public transport options. Vulnerable adults and persons under 18 regularly use hackney carriage and PHVs as a means of transport. The logistics of the area are such that these journeys will often be in the early hours of the morning or late at night and be unsupervised. Licensed vehicles are regularly used by parents, guardians, schools and welfare organisations as a means of transporting persons under 18. Furthermore, legislation is such that when waiting on a taxi rank a hackney carriage driver is unable, without reasonable cause, to refuse a hiring from a person under 18. When plying for hire hackney carriage drivers are therefore not in a position to decline hirings from young persons. The majority of hackney carriage and private hire hirings will be unsupervised, placing the driver in a position of trust. When entrusting young persons to the care of licensed drivers, the public expect those drivers to have been through rigorous checking procedures. They expect the licensing system to ensure a high level of protection. For these reasons the Council are of the opinion that a Level of DBS Disclosure is required.

8. The Council will make every effort to confirm the identity of the applicant before the DBS are asked to process a Disclosure. Verification of identity, date of birth, address and any change of name will be obtained. Incomplete or incorrect identification details may invalidate the DBS Disclosure.

Where an applicant claims to have changed his/her name by deed poll or any other mechanism (eg marriage, adoption, statutory declaration) he/she must produce documentary evidence of such a change.

Photocopies of any documentation will not be acceptable. Original documents must be produced. The Council may take copies of any photographic evidence and any birth certificates presented, but will not normally make photocopies of any address-related evidence. With regard to address-related evidence applicants will be assured that it is only the address section of the evidence that will be scrutinised by Officers.

9. The Council have a policy statement available to people who will be subject to a DBS Disclosure under these arrangements.

10. When a DBS Disclosure is desired, the Council using the official Disclosure Request Form will send the request to the DBS. However the costs are the responsibility of the applicant.
11. The DBS will reply to the nominated Council Countersignatory and the applicant either indicating that there is no trace on DBS records of a record which matches the details provided, or that those details appear identical with the person whose record will be attached. The record will contain details of all convictions recorded nationally against that person.
12. It should be noted that the DBS record will not include details of motoring conviction(s). Such information under separate arrangements will be obtained from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency. This will be provided on receipt of a written request, which must include the subject's driver number. A fee (for each individual enquiry) is payable at the time the request is made. The information given will include endorsement/disqualification details.
13. Where the information provided by the DBS differs from that provided by the applicant, and is of significance, the nominated Countersignatory will discuss the discrepancy with the applicant before reaching any final decision in which the nature of the information received is a factor.
14. It is noted that applicants themselves may reveal certain minor convictions or cautions which are not recorded in the national collection of criminal records and, therefore, not included in the convictions provided by the DBS. In general, corroboration of such convictions or cautions will not be sought from the DBS.
15. A person who believes the information provided by the DBS is incorrect and who wishes to make representations to the Council regarding the matter, may do so. Applicants should approach the DBS if they think a mistake has been made on a disclosure.

CHECKS ON PERSONS ALREADY IN POSSESSION OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE/PHV DRIVERS' LICENCES

16. Checks will not normally be made on persons other than in connection with an application for grant or renewal of a licence. If, however, serious allegations are made against a driver, or previously unrevealed information comes to light and the Council is satisfied that the information cannot be verified in any other way, the licence holder may be asked to produce a current Disclosure. The Council will undertake to pay the cost of the Disclosure. The Disclosure cannot be undertaken without the knowledge of the individual concerned who will be given an opportunity to discuss the outcome of the same.

The Council will not cover the cost of Disclosures in respect of first time and renewal applications for a licence. Should a licence holder refuse to co-operate with a request to produce a Disclosure, then the Council will take action accordingly, which could lead to the revocation or suspension of a licence.

USE OF INFORMATION

17. The fact that a person has a criminal record or is known to the police does not necessarily mean that he or she is unfit to hold a driver's licence. The Council will make a balanced judgement about a person's suitability taking into account only those offences, which are considered relevant to the person's suitability to hold a licence. A person's suitability will be looked at as a whole in the light of all the information available.

18. In deciding the relevance of conviction(s), the Council will bear in mind that offences, which took place many years in the past, may often have less relevance than recent offences. Similarly, a series of offences over a period of time is more likely to give cause for concern than an isolated minor conviction(s). In any event the importance of rehabilitation will be weighed against the need to protect the public.
19. In order to ensure consistent and fair treatment when determining whether or not criminal convictions render an applicant unsuitable to hold a licence, the Council have drawn up detailed policy guidelines containing general criteria against which applications may be considered.
20. Where it is discovered that a driver, licensed prior to implementation of the Criminal Records Bureau (now DBS), had failed to disclose past conviction(s), the Council will consider carefully whether they should now refuse to re-grant the driver licence. In most cases, if those convictions are such that they would now lead to the refusal of a licence, refusal will be considered. If, however, previously unrevealed convictions are discovered which would not now disqualify the individual from holding a license, consideration may be given to granting it.

APPEALS

21. Any person who is aggrieved by the Council's decision to refuse a driver's licence may appeal to a Magistrates' Court.

STORAGE AND DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS

22. Any information the DBS supply will be of a sensitive and personal nature. It will be used only in connection with the application which gave rise to the request for a Disclosure to be made. The Lead Countersignatory must ensure it is kept securely while the licensing process takes its course and that the information is not kept for longer than is necessary. An indication on the Council's own record that a DBS disclosure has been carried out may be made but this will not refer to specific offences.

CHECKS ON APPLICANTS FROM OVERSEAS

23. The council will expect persons who have lived overseas for more than 6 months to provide a certificate of conduct or equivalent from the country of residence.

MONITORING

24. Where possible the Council will collate the following information in respect of DBS Disclosures:
 - Number of DBS disclosures requested in respect of taxi applicants;
 - Time taken to receive disclosures, and
 - Any apparent difficulties with these arrangements, including the resource implications;

HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PHV DRIVERS UNDERTAKING CONTRACT HIRE WORK

25. Applicants who intend to undertake Contract Hire work may be required to undertake a further DBS Disclosure by the hirer. Lincolnshire County Council, for example, require hackney carriage and PHV drivers to undertake a Disclosure before undertaking contract work involving the transport of schoolchildren or vulnerable adults.

CODE OF CONDUCT HACKNEY CARRIAGE AND PRIVATE HIRE DRIVERS

Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Drivers (referred to in this document as drivers) are in a position of trust in respect of the safety and welfare of their passengers. The Licensing Authority, through its licensing team and committee, has to ensure that all drivers are 'fit and proper' to undertake their work as drivers and that they also act as ambassadors for the district. It is essential that the council and drivers work together in order to ensure members of the public are treated with dignity and respect, including reporting any concerns.

On occasions, drivers may become aware of, or have suspicions that, a passenger may be the victim of abuse, neglect or exploitation either sexual or otherwise, or at risk of becoming a victim. In addition, drivers themselves may be accused of misconduct or inappropriate behaviour through the misinterpretation of the driver's actions or conversation.

Therefore, Boston Borough Council has introduced this **Code of Conduct** which is aimed at providing the best possible service by protecting both passengers and drivers. This code ensures that concerns, suspicions of abuse, neglect or exploitation can be reported appropriately and minimise the risk of misunderstandings.

Drivers are expected to comply with this Code of Conduct. Failure to do so may result in the driver being referred to the Regulatory and Appeals Committee to explain the circumstances surrounding any incident. In the event of a repeated and/or serious failure to comply, drivers can expect that consideration will be given to the suspension or revocation of their licence.

It should be noted that the code does not over-ride any legislative requirements, licence conditions or contractual obligations, such as County Council contracts under the Green Badge scheme.

Drivers should:

- Act in a professional manner at all times
- Treat passengers and other road users with respect
- Keep relationships with passengers on an appropriate, professional basis
- Respect all individuals – regardless of age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion/belief, language spoken, race or ethnicity, pregnancy/maternity and marriage/civil partnership.

And be aware of:

- The safety and well-being of passengers being paramount
- The importance of the use of appropriate language
- The vulnerability of children and persons with special needs.

- Any instruction given about the care or first aid requirements of a passenger
- Possible caution required when dealing with passengers in distress
- Personal beliefs and standards, including dress and religion
- Passengers misreading situations
- The use of social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. These are public websites and therefore passengers conveyed may access a driver's site. Ensure you use the appropriate privacy settings to avoid passengers viewing your social media sites

Drivers should never:

- Become over-friendly or unprofessional in any way with passengers or engage in any form of inappropriate relationship, infatuation or show favouritism.
- Make physical contact with a passenger, unless in an emergency situation, or if required to do so because of the additional needs of the passenger.
- Administer medication unless a specific request has been made by the hirer.
- Photograph or video passengers in your care unless used in compliance with data protection legislation and any relevant codes of practice issued by the Home Office or Information Commissioner's Office.
- Engage with passengers who are children or vulnerable adults through social networking sites (such as Facebook and Twitter), instant messengers or any other online communication software such as mobile phone applications or video games
- Phone or send text messages to passengers other than directly concerning the hiring of your vehicle
- Swear at/in front of passengers or make personal/humiliating comments at/in front of passengers or tell inappropriate jokes to passengers
- Offer sweets, cigarettes or gifts of any sort.
- Stop anywhere other than the specified pick up/drop off points unless requested by the hirer.
- Show passengers inappropriate videos or pictures on your mobile phone or any other electronic device.
- Make inappropriate comments about other drivers, proprietors or operators to other persons either verbally, on social media or otherwise.

Safeguarding:

If a driver has concerns or suspects abuse, neglect or exploitation of a passenger then these should not be ignored. If there are any suspicions or concerns about the way someone is being treated it is important to report it to the appropriate authority. The safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults is everybody's responsibility. Remember that your information could help a vulnerable child or adult.

If a driver is working under a Lincolnshire County Council contract then those procedures set out in the Driver and Passenger Assistant Pack should be followed alongside any training received by the driver.

Otherwise, the following procedures should be complied with in reporting any information or suspicions you may have of anyone being subject to abuse, neglect or exploitation:

Action to be taken if you have concerns:

- If your concerns are of an urgent matter or you believe that a crime has been committed and there is an immediate risk of danger, telephone the police on **999 or 112**
- If you are suspicious or are concerned that a child or an adult is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm, including any form of mistreatment, abuse, neglect or exploitation but it is not of an urgent nature, please call the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Customer Service Centre on **01522 782111 for children** or **01522 782155 for adults**
- If you would prefer to speak to the police on a non-urgent matter then call them on **101** and follow the directions for Lincolnshire Police